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OTTAWA INTERESTS,

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

AND THE

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PEOPLE, &c.

SPEECH OF THE HON. M. CAMERON,

DELIVERED IN OTTAWA,

6TH FEBRUARY, 1864.

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OTTAWA

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

The Committee to whom was referred the matter of publishing the Hon. M. CAMERON's Speech, have the satisfaction of knowing that already it has had a wide circulation through the medium of three of our City papers—the "Citizen", the "Union," and the "Banner." But considering the importance and excellence of the argument presented by the Hon. Speaker, it has been deemed proper to give it a wider circulation and a more permanent form.

Two thousand copies are printed by order of the Bytown Division of the Sons of Temperance, and the Committee express the earnest hope that our Citizens and residents in the vicinity of Ottawa, will seriously ponder the Temperance question, and now consider whether it is not imperatively necessary, with a view to the happiness and prosperity of the people and the safety of our children, that they should abstain from all intoxicating drinks.

SPEECH OF THE HON. M. CAMERON.

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On Monday evening, the 8th inst., one of the largest and most enthusiastic meetings ever assembled in Ottawa was held in the commodious lecture room of the Wesleyan Church, Metcalfe street. Every available spot was occupied. Large numbers had to stand, and many went away unable to gain admission. Announcements having been made from different pulpits, on the preceding day that the Hon. MALCOLM CAMERON would address the meeting, the attention of our citizens, was awakened, and the result was a pretty full representation of the intelligence and respectability of the city.

Soon after 7 o'clock, A. WORKMAN, Esq., was called to the chair. The Rev. W. SCOTT read the beautiful and appropriate narrative of the Good Samaritan from the 10th of Luke, and afterwards engaged in prayer. A few words from the Chairman introduced the Rev. T. WARDROPE, who expressed his gladness at the position he was then called to occupy. He was cheered by the presence of old friends, and delighted with reminiscences of old times. This meeting, he was persuaded, would be attended with benefit. We have, (said Mr W.) on this platform the man who had perhaps spoken more than any other man in Canada on the subject of Temperance, and we have the man who had perhaps written more on the subject than any other man, and we have also, present with us, perhaps the oldest teetotaler in Canada. (Col. Barritt) who, though now past 70 years old, had never tasted spirituous liquors. We have especially come together to hear Mr. Cameron, and he (Mr. W.) would not detain the meeting. He would, however, address a word to the ladies, so many of whom he was glad to see present. They were often alluded to and spoken to lightly. There were often treated lightly; but, for his part, now in speaking to them and of them, he felt the deep seriousness of their position in reference to this great subject of Temperance. No doubt, they exerted a powerful influence on society, and if they would be decided, firm and uncompromising, on this question they would be able to influence the decisions of many of the other sex. There was too much deference to evil habit and palliation of vice. Men were looked up to as lords of creation, who could hardly do wrong, instead of a steady resistance of the tipping practices of society. "A teetotaler or no husband" would materially affect the minds of many, and they would be led to abandon a vice rather than forfeit the friendship and fellowship of the fair sex. He (Mr. W.) expressed the hope that other and regular meetings to be held would be counte-

nanced and regularly attended by the ladies, and that the cause of temperance would revive and prosper.

A select choir then sung a very excellent and appropriate anthem, accompanied by the melodeon.

Hon. M. CAMERON was then introduced by the Chairman, and, on rising, was received with prolonged applause. He then said:—Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: I have been referred to by a previous speaker as a sincere and devoted friend of the temperance cause, and it has even been suggested that, although one swallow does not make a summer, yet that my coming among you at this time will most likely be followed by many others who will be as the forerunners of more, preparatory to the establishment of the Seat of Government in this city, which, I believe, will soon be an accomplished fact. You must not, however, suppose that "birds of a feather flock together," in such a sense as that those who follow me and may hereafter dwell among you as well as myself, will all be of my mind in reference to the drinking usages of society. I regret to say, what I know, that many persons in the public offices or departments of the country are far from what they ought to be in this respect. In consequence of intemperance many had lost their offices, but even yet there were many who were not setting a good example, and it was, therefore, a matter of vast importance that the young men of Ottawa should, by association with the temperance societies, be in a position to resist the temptations to which they would be exposed in future, and perhaps be the means of inducing many to follow their good example. Being in Ottawa, with a view to securing a residence, I have been requested to remain a day or two and deliver an address on temperance. I readily yielded, not without an impression that it might be to my interest to do so. I expect to become a resident here, and I thought I could not better introduce myself to you than in this way. I am thus enabled to avow my principles, associate myself with the right kind of companions, and once more protest against the folly, the blindness, the absurdity, and the sin of the present customs of society, as well as once more to protest against the weak, ignorant and unholy legislation of the age on the question of intoxicating drinks.

I am, as many of you know, or rather I should say I was a Perth boy, one of the old district of Johnstown, of which Nepean once formed a part, and you had then to go to Brockville to transact business of a judicial character. Times have changed since then, but events

of the past are within the recollection of many of us. The settlements were chiefly of U.E. loyalists, who, for a noble principle—a loyal sentiment—left their homes and estates, and preferred an abode in the wilderness of Canada. Emigrants and old soldiers, after the close of the war of 1812, added to the number. They have often been depreciated and underrated, but they were nevertheless a superior class of settlers. It is true that many of them were aided by the Government in their removal to this country; but it was not on account of their pauperism, but for other and political reasons. Together they formed as heterogeneous a conglomeration of human intellect, energy, ambition and passion, as ever was thrown together. The ability and energy of the people have been exhibited again and again in the numbers of their descendants who have filled and now fill honourable places in Parliament, at the bar, on the bench, and in the pulpits of Canada. Such was the influence and character of the population, of which I have spoken, that for some time they furnished one-fourth of the whole representation in the Parliament of Western Canada. They will be remembered as the Jones', Morrisons', Sherwoods', Mallocks', Wilsons', Richards', Lees', Scots', McKays', Bells', Taylors', Ross', Powells', Johnstons', Grahams', Johnsons', Camerons', &c., &c., &c. But when you think of what they have accomplished, and you enquire further what they are still doing, you will find at once the connexion their names have with my subject.

I do not refer here to all those whom I have enumerated, nor do I wish to be understood as specifying any in particular; but I think it pertinent to ask: have the young men of that period—the descendants of worthy fathers—have they taken root, lived up to their advantages and responsibilities, and helped, as they ought to have done, to elevate the country, and establish the true principles of virtue, morality and religion. Have they improved upon, or even maintained the character of their fathers? Notwithstanding that one or more names of each family have been distinguished for many excellencies, is it not a melancholy fact that other branches of these families, that gave large promises of talent, who had the greatest amount of energy, and ought to day to fill the places of their fathers or brothers, at the Bar, on the Bench, in the Senate, and the Pulpit, now fill, alas! not unwept, indeed, but dishonored graves! From what cause, if not that their fathers, and society in general, erred on the tendency of stimulating drinks to create an appetite for more—were ignorant of the nature and effects of alcohol on the human system, or destructive to their own bodies. They knew how, for they were instructed in the business of improving and preserving stock: their cattle were cared for—sheep and oxen properly fed: what was injurious in such cases was withheld, but for themselves, they were ignorant or mis-

directed in what they should eat or drink, and, yielding to bad example, the brightest stars were darkened, or fell to the earth ruined—lost for ever. If we recollect what we knew of the history of forty years—if we estimate the amount of personal suffering, the shattered constitutions, the palsied and trembling hands, the bloated and besotted face, the nervous and wild delirium, the consequent suicides and murders, associated with these histories—if we think of the broken-hearted mothers who have wept, and are weeping more tears than would swim their bodies—if we contemplate the blighted hopes of the brightest brides, that had left their happy homes to mourn thro' sleepless nights the carousing husbands, who had given themselves to the restaurant and the tap room, or that still more awful—more dreadful—more frightfully shocking case where even the virtuous and beautiful woman herself giving way in despair to the vicious habits of fathers, brothers or husbands—if, I say, we were to contemplate these sad events, would we not be appalled? Is it exaggeration to say, that histories in Perth, in Brockville and Ottawa, must arise to every mind, that no temperance speaker can paint in stronger colors than the facts—that in truth not even imagination can render darker? Facts there are which forbid the exercise of hope, considering the fearful course of the victims, to the very hour of dissolution.

We have lived down the period when our efforts to promote temperance were suspected of a tendency to infidelity. The great majority of clergymen co-operated with us and are leaders in the good work. Medical men entertain more sober views on this question, although even yet there are those who prescribe alcohol to cure disease, perhaps the only prescription they give, which they are willing to take themselves. The best authors and writers for the press are giving a very different tone to literature. Even the *Westminster Review* has frankly acknowledged its former errors, and has retracted what it formerly published on the utility of alcohol, confessing that it was better to acknowledge a fault than to persevere in error.

I could detail four or five cases, which could not but be impressive and affecting. I could show the extremes from affluence to misery, reached in a few years by more than one family. I could show you how the son of a major-general, himself a captain, and afterwards an M. P.—a man exalted above all these by nobleness of mind, by exalted benevolence and kindness of heart—this man cast down to the lowest depth of degradation, and dying on a tavern floor,

"Unhousel'd, disappointed, unannealed,
No reckoning made, but sent to his account
With all his imperfections on his head."

His wife, once the leader of society, reduced to beggary, passing from house to house with a pillow

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case, asking for a little flour—begging for bread to keep her from starvation. One son, educated for, and having practised as a barrister, enlisted as a private soldier, and was at last frozen to death on the public highway; another, educated as a physician, dying in an outhouse; while a third had been imprisoned for assaulting his parent. Such are some of the results of intemperance. You bid me halt!—you wish not to believe me—you say stop! and so I would, if I did not believe that what was then done some twenty years ago is still doing, by reason of the same pernicious habits of drinking. I would stop if I did not believe that even now, in Ottawa, some of the best of parents, some of God's own children, are weeping as bitter tears as were shed over fallen humanity, over children who are at this day being dragged over the same accursed road to perdition. The same habits are at work, producing the self-same results; and you young men who are placed in the providence of God, at this important period in Canadian and Ottawa history, in the responsible situation of "representative men," have to determine at once whether you will think, read, examine and decide what have been the causes of past intemperance, and fearful failure—what are the usual effects of daily indulgence; and you must judge also from the facts and results, how far my allusion and opinion concerning the history of the past is correct and true: and then, in view of the truth elicited by due examination, determine whether you will go on in the same course and risk the same results, or whether you will at once make safe work with this question, and resolve "to touch not, taste not, handle not," anything that will destroy your nervous system, awaken ungovernable appetite, and unfit you for the highest duties of life, and thus be prepared and aided in the fulfilment of your high destiny, set an example of sobriety and industry, which shall give tone and character to the city of Ottawa—that shall embalm your names in the archives of its history. Like Zion of old, your chief glory may be, nay, ought to be, that in the period of Ottawa's inauguration as the seat of Government, this man and that were born there. Let it be the starting point of the city's regeneration, this revival of temperance, which shall prove alike beneficial to those who have grown up with the city's history and those who are shortly to come among you and share your fate. The prospect may be bright or gloomy, just as you may decide.

My young friends, I have now lived about fifty-six years. The almond tree has begun to blossom, the strong men to bow themselves, and those that look out of the window to be darkened, and I have reason to bless God that I have been kept from stimulants and tobacco, which last is a poison under another form. I owe this to the faithful vigilance of a strong-minded, much tried and suffering mother. I owe everything I have

ever enjoyed to the fact of my abstinence; and I say to you now, as if I were in the presence of the Angel of Judgment, that your future success—your usefulness—your happiness—your health, and most probably your salvation, depends on your investigation of this subject. To mothers, to parents, I would say, begin early to inculcate these principles. Do not act the foolish part of some I have recently seen and known, who have deliberately given the wine-cup to their children, quite young, in order, as they say, to create a dislike to it. The reverse will inevitably be the result. Teach them by precept and example, from their earliest days, wholly to abstain from that which intoxicates. You cannot begin too soon. And to young men, again I say, investigate this matter. I have talked long already, but I cannot stop here. I ask you to read Youmans' Carpenter, Prof. Miller, and the Laws of Life, an American publication. Read and study, these, and other works on these subjects, and you will be satisfied that all drinking and smoking is injurious to health. And what is life without health. I have given you many facts; more might be adduced, but is it necessary to make the case stronger? The use of these stimulating beverages leads to loss of talent, loss of character, loss of health, loss of life—in short, the loss of everything dear and valuable. I have a feeling heart, and I have seen these sad results. I have felt them keenly in those of my friends. You have seen similar results. You know as well as I do that the chief expenses of our judiciary, of our prisons, of our hospitals, of our penitentiaries, arise from intemperance. The chief business of our lower courts arises from the drunk and disorderly. Then, I ask, why cling to these antiquated abuses? Why not abandon them and adopt a more rational and consistent course, the course of total abstinence. The time has come for you to consider what shall be the character and destiny of your future city—whether you shall be sober, industrious and prosperous, or whether you shall be notorious for drunkenness, debauchery, and crime. Remember, also, who is your neighbor, according to the beautiful Scripture which was read at the beginning of this meeting, and render help to those who have fallen among thieves. To the ladies, also, I must appeal, as they are really the greatest sufferers. As mothers, they suffer tortures that no other breast can suffer: their fondest hopes, their tenderest affections, their highest ambition, their secret pride, their boundless and only unselfish, enduring love—all are wounded, crushed, broken. As wives and nurses, they are mortified and degraded: they suffer insult and want, and often blows and death. As daughters, they are exposed to temptation and evil. They suffer contamination from evil society—loss of position and self-respect. Of all pitiable objects on earth, the drunkard's daughter is the most forlorn and helpless. Oh, then, women of Ottawa, arise in your strength—in your religious convictions—in your conscientious love of truth—by your love of your offspring—by your affection for

the sex—by your love of self—by your fear of God, and your hope of heaven—unite to destroy this great, this fearful, this almost sole cause of all your earthly troubles. If you do so unitedly act, you are invincible! Your weak yielding to habit—your kind obedience to assumed authority—your deference for reputed superiority—your fear of singularity—your respect for fashion and custom, has dragged you on to be the very cause of much of the evil that exists, and therefore you justly suffer much of the penalty. If you would save your husbands from the drunkard's doom—if you would redeem your sons, and save them from ruin—begin yourselves by an entire abstinence from all that can intoxicate. Hoist the temperance flag—a sober man or no husband—and you are safe, and the cause itself also will be safe. You have, perhaps, seen an account of the Black Valley Railroad. I met with it the other day in Montreal, and here it is: You have in this a vignette or cartoon of this road in full operation. It would be ludicrous if it were not an awfully true delineation of the way in which multitudes take passage to destruction. The trains move by a progressive timetable, beginning at Sippington, passing by Topersville, arriving at Drunkard's Curve; thence rapidly running by express to Demonland, and then by lightning express through Black Valley to Destruction. We are told that persons desiring to leave the train will find the stages of the Temperance Alliance at Drunkard's Curve, and all the stations, above, ready to convey them free to any of the villages upon Coldstream River. Below Drunkard's Curve, ambulances will be used. Passengers in the sleeping-cars, especially stock-holders, will be waked up at Screech-Owl Forest, Thunderland, and at the end of the road. And then we are told that stages from Tobacco-land connect with all the trains. If any of you have taken passage on this road, you had better leave the train at once. If you have reached the station where an ambulance is needed, be quick to avail yourselves of the opportunity of deliverance—go further and you are lost. This Black Valley Railroad carries more than 30,000 into eternity annually. It is said the business of the road increases rapidly, but I trust that in this locality the business will debase. It is worthy of much consideration that the only telegrams that come over the wires from the lower terminus of the road is, "At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." I fear there are very few who never went even as far as Sippington, but let us hope that many will see and feel the duty of avoiding that road altogether, and travel henceforth on the only safe road of Total Abstinence. Various methods have been tried, and a great variety of machinery is in operation to promote temperance. The excellent association with whom we meet this evening, has done much, and is well calculated for executive and administrative work, and for operating on the Legislature, and as

an ally of the "Alliance" will do much. The "Alliance" for Canada, whose first anniversary was recently held in Montreal, is intended to unite all possible strength on the question of legal prohibition. Every man who desires to remedy or reduce the evil, though not himself a teetotaler, can lend his aid by becoming a member of the "Alliance." It has no pledge, but is designed to combine the influence of all who are convinced of the public evil of intemperance and the traffic. The Sons, the Good Templars, the Social Circle, the Knights, and the old Temperance Societies, can unite in getting up petitions, and calling upon the Government to pass Mr. Dunkin's Bill, which would give power to every municipality to deal with the evil, and to punish the violators of existing laws, which is found now to be almost impossible. We cannot get all we want at once, we must be content with an instalment. The man who asked of his neighbor timber to build a barn or stable, was refused; but when he asked for a couple of sticks for gate-posts, he got what he asked, which was, in reality, all he wanted. We shall have most of what we want if we succeed in obtaining the passage of Mr. Dunkin's Bill. He is a worthy man, co-operating with us in a good work, and let us hope that success will attend us in the Legislature of the country. Meanwhile let us keep at work in the old Temperance Societies. I am always in the habit of recommending everywhere the keeping up of the good old fashioned society, with a pledge to be signed at the meeting, at the secretary's office, and at open monthly meetings—free of charge, ceremony, secrecy or badge. With a good committee this will always bring in many who would never join any other, but might be faithful and useful in this. I fear you are wearied of me, but I could easily go on for hours. There is the pathology, the philosophy of drunkenness untouched—the question of nutriment in alcohol—the wine question—the wedding of Cana—the advice to Timothy, which last must always be considered a testimony in our favour. Timothy was a man more than 30 years of age. Up to this time he had been a water drinker, but by reason of infirmity or sickness, was urged to take a little wine, not such as is now called wine, made up of logwood and whiskey, but the pure juice of the grape. We might take up the case of Noah, or Lot, or Eli's sons, the fat drunkard of Ephraim and Holofernes. Then the opposite cases of Manoah, Hannah, Samson, Daniel. John the Baptist, and the Rechabites of an earlier age. All these are untouched or only thus referred to as topics worthy of discussion. Then we might consider the effects of drinking on men of genius. There are Burns, Byron, Savage, and others. Then there are the effects of drinking on parson, doctors, lawyers and other professional men; and alas, Canada furnishes innumerable facts, many of which will come up to the recollection of many who have noticed the career

and end of persons who have been slain and ruined by drink. Then there are the effects of this traffic on trade, on legislation, on law-courts, asylums and penitentiaries before referred to in part. Any of these topics separately would furnish a lecture, but I cannot, will not now dwell on any of them, unless you want any point alluded to explained or illustrated. Then I will do my best. But as you do not, I take it for granted that you admit my case proved, and the use of stimulants is condemned. I will take it for granted that you believe that Lot, Noah the fat drunkards of Ephraim and the Corinthian wine-bibbers, got no good by their practice; that they are not recorded for our imitation, or examples to follow; while the Nazarites, the Rechabites, Manoah, Hannah, Samuel, Daniel and his companions, are good enough society for us to be in, and following their footsteps can and will do us no harm. Then in modern times—the times in which we live—we find ourselves identified with men most renowned for benevolence, from Father Mathew downwards. Vast numbers are now on our side who were once against us, or indifferent to our work. The most spiritual and evangelical of every church are now actively engaged in promoting our objects. A great change has taken place among the clergymen of the Church of England. More than 500 are now earnestly engaged in the temperance reform. The *Church of England Temperance Magazine* has already done essential service in our necessary, noble and divinely-honored enterprise. With the new year, a new series has commenced, much improved, and will exert a powerful influence for good. The time was when the principles for which Archdeacon Jeffrey, of Bombay, contended, were unheeded and deemed fanatical. My friend, Mr. Scott, will remember when we sent for large numbers of his remarkable tract on "What is the Gospel?" in which he demonstrates that this work is gospel-work. Now there are hundreds in his own church who have embraced his views, and give them free circulation. Allow me also to state that in England, as I learn from the *Record* in my hand, there has been recently a conference of schoolmasters. Upwards of forty teachers were present, and the subjects discussed were most important. On the subject of school-books a very interesting conversation took place, and among other things the publication of a temperance reading book was recommended for the use of those teachers who may be willing to adopt it—a most important and useful proposition; all of which goes to show the progress this cause is making in the old country, and we cannot do better than emulate their zeal and follow in their footsteps. Clergymen and other public men who for years seemed to be working alone, and amidst much obloquy and opposition, now meet with sympathy and co-operation, as, for instance, the Rev. W. W. Robinson who has recently published an admirable tract entitled "A Clergyman's Reasons for Teetotalism." The cause is moving onward. Our Alliance in Canada is publishing in Montreal an excellent monthly called

the *Canadian Patriot*, well worthy of support. You are prepared to admit that ours is the safe side. Then unite with us. Do not wish us God's speed, and then associate practically with our adversaries—taking the social cup and renting your property for taverns and grog shops. Be consistent, if you believe we are right. Do the right, and you will never regret it. If then it be so, and you are satisfied with the evidence—with the company you will be in—with the righteousness of the cause, and the insurance it is against delusion and error—then, I say unite heartily with us and give a long pull, a strong pull and a pull altogether. Rescue Ottawa from the list of drinking, gambling, dissipated holes; and make it, what it ought to be, pure and elevated morally, as it is beautiful, grand and gorgeous naturally—that it may become not only the seat of government, but the seat of worth, the focus of truth, possessing the haven of virtue and temperance that may henceforth enlighten and elevate the province. (The honorable gentleman sat down, and the applause which followed was universal and long continued.)

The choir sung a piece, and the CHAIRMAN called on the Rev. Mr. Scott to address the meeting. Mr. Scott said he should be sorry to weaken the impression which he was sure, had been made; and he feared he was incapable of deepening it. It afforded him great pleasure again to meet with and hear his friend, Mr. Cameron, with whom he had been a co-laborer in other parts of the country for many years. He (Mr. S.) was glad that Mr. Cameron had lost none of his zeal, his clearness of expression and soundness of argument. He hoped that his visit would tend to a revival of the temperance cause in Ottawa, and he would appeal to the young men then present to take the pledge and identify themselves with us in this good cause. Before he sat down he would move a resolution which he was sure would meet with the hearty approbation of this large and respectable audience. Mr. Scott moved: "That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Hon. M. Cameron for the very able interesting and eloquent address with which he has favored us on this occasion."

The resolution was briefly seconded by the Rev. J. ELLIOT, who said he was not satisfied with Mr. Cameron's speech. The fact was he had now heard him for the first time, and he longed to hear him again. He had been delighted and profited, but it seemed as though he had not heard enough. However, we might congratulate ourselves that he was shortly to be a resident among us, and we might therefore anticipate many opportunities of hearing him on this subject. Most cheerfully did he second the resolution of thanks, which he was sure would be unanimously adopted.

The motion, being put by the CHAIRMAN, was passed enthusiastically and unanimously.

The choir again sang an excellent piece.

The benediction was pronounced by Rev. Mr. Wardrop, and the large meeting dispersed evidently delighted with the proceedings of the evening.

WORDS OF WISDOM AND WARNING.

**Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath
contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds with-
out cause? who hath redness of eyes?**

**They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek
mixed wine.**

**Look not thou upon the Wine when it is red, when it
giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.**

**At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an
adder.**

**Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart
shall utter perverse things.**

**Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of
the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.**

**They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick;
they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I
will seek it yet again.—Proverbs 23, 29-35.**

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